GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COAL AND MINES
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2401
ANSWERED ON:03.12.2002
UNDERGROUND FIRE IN COAL MINES OF JHARIA
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Will the Minister of COAL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether underground fire in the mines of coal city, Jharia has not been controlled till now ;

(b) if so, the details of the steps taken so far/being taken to control this fire;

(c) the details of the successful utlization of the loan of one crore 20 lakh dollar taken from America by the Bharat Coking Coal Limited for the purpose;

(d) whether there is any proposal to evacuate the city and rehabilitate the displaced people elsewhere; and

(e): if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF COAL & MINES (SUSHREE UMA BHARATI)

(a) & (b): Jharia town is surrounded by major mine fires like Kujama, Lodna, Simlabahal/ Bhalgora, Ena andRajapur. However, at present, there is no mine fire below Jharia Town.

Steps taken/being taken by BCCL to control fire and subsidence surrounding Jharia city are:-

(i) Earlier (during 1976-1988) total 22 fire projects were approved and implemented in BCCL,5 were in the mines surrounding Jharia city.

(ii) Stabilisation below Jharia water board tank and at Bata More& Bus Stand has been completed under Environment Management and Subsidence Control (EMSC).Schemes for dealing with fire and subsidence at Rajapur and Lodna under EMSC are also being implemented.

(iii) BCCL has also been taking steps to control underground &surface fires surrounding Jharia city by construction of isolation stoppings, sand flushing, inert gas injection, blanketing at surface, digging out, trench cutting, water pooling, plantation etc.

(iv) There are identified locations surrounding Jharia city which are endangered due to effects of fire and subsidence. These sites are Choithikuli, Katras More,Indira Chowk, Kukurthapa, New Colony near Parsatand, Khas Jharia(Part), Samsher Nagar, Bokapahari, 1 Pit area, Dhaskapatti, Suratand andHanumangarhi. Total no. of houses identified as unstable in these sites are 1441 non-BCCL houses and 237 BCCL houses.Shifting of these houses have been included in the demonstration scheme under EMSC −"Shiftingof people from the most endangered area of BCCL". This demonstration scheme is under implementation.

(c): A world bank aided project "Jharia mine fire control technical assistance project" was undertaken in 1994 with assistance of US $ 12 million. This was a diagnostic study for fire fighting programme as well as environment management plan for Jharia coalfield and conducted in association with M/s. Gai-Metchemand M/s. Norwest respectively. Following completion of study, a workshop was conducted and workshop document was prepared. The main findings of this world bank study report, submitted in 1996- 1997, were:-

- Overall area of fire reduced from 17 Sq. Km to 8.9 Sq. Km.
- Jharia, Kirkend and other built up area are endangered by fire.
- Total extinguishment of fire immediately is not achievable but further advance of these fires can be controlled by various measures.
- 22300 families are required to be shifted out of which 10800 family area in high risk zone requiring immediate resettlement and this would require around Rs. 770 crores.
- Dhanbad-Patherdih rail line & Adra-Gomoh rail line are

endangered and need protection measures. Ekra, Kari & Chatkari Jore require immediate ground stabilisation.

• Total cost of fire control/subsidence control, rehabilitation and environment control was estimated at Rs. 4071 crores and time frame indicated for implementation was 15-20 years.

(d) & (e): At present, there is no proposal to evacuate Jharia city. However, shifting of identified endangered localities around Jharia town as per the demonstration scheme mentioned in (a) & (b) above are under implementation.